

# A LECTURE,

DELIVERED BY

REV. THOMAS K. BEECHER,

(CONGREGATIONALIST,)

*At Elmira, N. Y., January 9, 1870.*

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“LET ANOTHER MAN PRAISE THEE, NOT THINE OWN MOUTH; A STRANGER, AND NOT THINE OWN LIPS.”

*Proverbs xxvii, 2.*

If any man, however deserving, begin to boast and speak often of his past record and public services, he makes himself offensive.

But when a general gives credit to his brother generals, and ascribes victory to their wisdom and the valor of the army, then all are pleased. Such words are twice useful—they profit him that speaks, and them of whom they are spoken.

In something the same way we are offended when we hear or read the words which Churchmen speak in praise each of his own church or denomination. They seem conceited, arrogant, offensive. They promote vainglory at home and ill will abroad.

But it has seemed to me that Christian pastors and prelates might be at least as courteous one to another as army

officers are! And if we would note and praise the beauty of our sister churches more, and silence our own boastfulness, there might come to pass among Christian people a smiling charity and peaceful rejoicing.

I invite you, therefore, this evening, to view the beauty, the uses, and the truth that belong to those Christians among us who are popularly called

## EPISCOPALIANS.

In this city there are four kinds of churches that have Bishops, and therefore may call themselves Episcopal.

Roman Episcopal.

Protestant Episcopal.

Methodist Episcopal.

American Methodist Episcopal Zion.

But only one of these is generally known as the Episcopal Church, namely, the Protestant Episcopal Church, represented in this city by two parishes and a mission.

This Episcopal Church in America is, in fact, a continuation of the Church of England. As gardeners lay down a branch of a vine and stake it fast and cover it till it takes root, and then cut it off and leave it to grow by its own roots, so the Episcopal Church in this land was a branch of the Church of England, which was laid down and rooted, and by our Revolutionary War was cut off to grow ever after with roots of its own.

The Church in America differs from the Church of England in those matters chiefly that must needs have been changed because these States ceased to be colonies and became a nation with differing political constitution. Instead of King, the Churchman in America says President; for Parliament, Congress; he needs a prayer quite new for his Legislature and Governor, for in England there were

none such. But he drops all mention of the Gunpowder Plot, the martyrdom of Charles I., the accession and happy reign of our sovereign lady, Queen Victoria, and all other strictly English events.

The American Churchman omits, too, the Athanasian Creed, which is long and true, but has a dry rattle in it that makes irreverent people smile.

Of all Protestant churches, the Episcopal best deserves the name REFORMED. She preserves so many of the usages and excellencies of the Roman Church, and so few of her errors, that it is quite easy to perceive that she is a Reformed Church. All other Protestant churches seem revolutionary rather than reformed.

The Reformation in England was more than two hundred years long. There were no volcanic convulsions: no one brilliant Fourth of July day in which the great reform was proclaimed. Nor was the Reformation purely and disinterestedly religious.

When the Pope (Urban V. 1365) demanded large sums of money, in payment of tribute long in arrear, Parliament gave willing ear to the reformer Wickliffe, who denied the authority of Rome, and so excused the nation from paying its debt. Afterwards (1380) this same great man finished a translation of the Latin Bible into English! He wrote tracts for the people. He revived preaching to the people. His disciples went diligently up and down the land, teaching and preaching the truth and the authority of Holy Scripture.

Thus, one hundred and fifty years before Luther was heard of as a revolutionary reformer (1518), the leaven of Bible reading and private thinking was at work among the English people.

But the Church in England was still Roman Catholic, notwithstanding the work that was going on among the

people. The followers of Wickliffe, known in history as Lollards, have furnished thousands of names to the Bishops' list of heretics, elsewhere known as the noble army of martyrs.

During the reign of Henry VIII. (1534) the Church in England was declared independent of Rome. This was perhaps the crisis of the English Reformation.

This curious king, having married his brother's widow by special permission of the Church, by and by applied to that same Church to declare the marriage unlawful; and when the Bishop of Rome would not grant this required divorce, Henry declared it himself, married again, laughed at his own excommunication, caused himself to be proclaimed Supreme Head of the Church of England, and to prove that in all these steps he was quite right, he cut off any man's head who should dispute or deny the same,—*e. g.*, Sir Thomas More (1534).

Thus, then, we come to a Church independent of Rome, but not yet reformed. The Bible was in many churches. Yet men, not a few, were slain for reading it and talking it. Among these, William Tyndale deserves our mention; for he translated the New Testament into felicitous English, and published much wise doctrine, in consequence of which he was duly strangled and burned.

The king multiplied Bibles but cut off Bible-readers.

After Henry and his stormy ways came pious and gentle Edward VI. to the throne, and at once the flower of reform began to blossom, and the Church to show the features which she wears to-day.

The English Bible was read by lessons at morning and evening service as now. The Liturgy was translated and said in English. The Creed of the Church was packed in forty-two Articles, afterward reduced to the famous Thirty-nine. Accordingly both the bread and wine were given to

the common people at the sacrament. And other reforms and purifyings were set afoot.

Edward's reign was a short one (1547—53); long enough to introduce these changes, yet short enough to keep the Protestants from getting too much headway.

After him came the pious but gloomy and unhappy Queen Mary, who strove to bring the realm of England back to Rome. She caused persuasive fires to be kindled for the good of dissenting souls. She did what she could, but she could not undo the Reformation. Parliament and the people were too much for her. But her opposition kept the reformers from running into extravagance and cruelty.

After Mary came Elizabeth, who caused Roman Catholics at one extreme and Puritans at the other to feel her scorn, and suffer fines, imprisonment, and death.

Then came James I., of England, by whose order our present Bible was prepared and printed and authorized.

And thus from reign to reign the Church of England came down, acquiring little by little her present shape, and laying off the corruption and unreason of the Roman Church, as then existing and administered in that rude age.

The Prayer-book was substantially complete as we now have it, in the seventeenth century (1661). Thus this reformed Church of England filled up nearly three hundred years in her work of purifying and simplifying. And of all Protestant Churches, therefore, she best deserves the name reformed.

In this country the first parish of this Church was probably that in Jamestown, Va., 1606—8. Down to the Revolutionary War, the Church in this land was under the care of the Bishops of London.

Shortly after the Revolution an application was made to Parliament to allow an American Bishop to be consecrated.

But the Puritans and Presbyterians opposed the proposition, and so Mr. Seabury, the candidate, had to put up with a second-rate consecration at the hands of certain Scotch Bishops. But at last, in 1787, Parliament allowed the Archbishop of Canterbury to consecrate three regular first-class Bishops for New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia, respectively. Since then the holy unction has not been allowed to fail. With pious care, it has been propagated. And the Episcopal Church in these United States stands to-day as truly and regularly in the line of Apostolic Succession as the Church of England herself.

After this mere outline of her history, it remains that I note some of her excellent uses and beauties.

1. The Episcopal Church offers for our use the most venerable liturgy in the English tongue. The devotional treasures of the Roman Catholic Church are embalmed and buried in Latin. But in English there are no lessons, gospels, psalms, collects, confessions, thanksgivings, prayers—in one word, no religious FORM BOOK that can stand a moment in comparison with the Prayer-book of the Episcopal Church in the twofold quality of richness and age.

The proper name, because truly descriptive, for this Church, would be CHURCH OF THE PRAYER-BOOK. As is the way with all other Churches, so here, the Church champions and leaders have many wise things to say about the Church and her prerogative. But the pious multitude that frequent her courts are drawn thither mostly by love of the prayers and praises, the litanies and lessons of the Prayer-book.

And, brethren of every name, I certify you that you rarely hear in any church a prayer spoken in English, that is not indebted to the Prayer-book for some of its choicest periods.

And further, I doubt whether life has in store for any of you an uplift so high, or downfall so deep, but that you can

find company for your soul and fitting words for your lips among the treasures of this Book of Common Prayer.

*In all time of our tribulation; in all time of our prosperity; in the hour of death and in the Day of Judgment; Good Lord deliver us.*

As a consequence of the Prayer-book and its use I note :

2. The Episcopal Church preserves a very high grade of dignity, decency, propriety, and permanence in all her public offices.

In nearly every newspaper you may read some funny story based upon the ignorance or eccentricity or blasphemous familiarity of some extemporizing prayer-maker. All of you here present have been at some time shocked or bored by public devotional performances. Nothing of this sort ever occurs in the Episcopal Church. All things are done and spoken decently and in order.

And so too of permanence and its accumulating worth of holy association:—no transient observer can adequately value this treasure of a birthright Churchman.

To be using to-day the self-same words that have through the centuries declared the faith or made known the prayer of that mighty multitude, who, being now delivered from the burden of the flesh, are in joy and felicity :

To be baptized in infancy, and never to know a time when we were not recognized and welcomed among the millions who have entered by the same door :

To be confirmed in due time, in a faith that has sustained a noble army of confessors, approving its worth through persecutions and prosperities, a strength to the tried and a chastening to the worldly minded :

To be married, by an authority before which kings and peasants bow alike, asking benediction upon the covenant, that without respect of persons binds by the words of duty, the highest and the lowest :

To bring our new-born children as we were brought, to begin where we began, and to grow up to fill our places :

To die in the faith, and almost hear the Gospel words soon to be spoken over one's own grave as over the thousand times ten thousand of them who have slept in Jesus :

In short, to be a devout and consistent Churchman, brings a man through aisles fragrant with holy association, and accompanied by a long procession of the good, chanting as they march a unison of piety and hope until they come to the holy place where shining saints sing the new song of the redeemed. And they sing with them.

Another excellence I note.

3. The Episcopal Church furnishes (to all who need such comfort) the assurance of an organic and unbroken unity and succession from Jesus Christ through the Apostles, by a line of authentic bishops, down to the Bishop of this Diocese.

King Henry VIII. and Queen Elizabeth, with their proclamations and Parliaments, are so conspicuous and fill so much space in the merely political history of the English Church, that many able writers deny that the river of apostolic succession so dammed by them, could ever get around the dam and flow along again, pure and uncontaminated. I cannot decide this question absolutely.

What I say is this : The Apostolic Succession in the Episcopal Church can be traced back so many hundred years into the dim past, that it is no shame to any man to say, "*I believe it to extend back to PETER, PAUL and JOHN ;*" and he who verily believes that the ordaining or confirming hand of the Bishop of this Diocese is electric with the spiritual life that proceeds from Jesus of Galilee, will find it a hand of virtue and worth. He who doubts will find it a hand of form and ceremony.

And so without stopping to decide the question whether our Bishop is really a successor of Paul or John, I say that



the Episcopal Church affords so much evidence that she has in her Episcopate the true succession, that it is no shame to any common man to believe her. And if a man BELIEVES in his Bishop, he will get from him all the benefit that can come from bishops.

Brethren, many needy souls are not able to lay hold upon God one by one. They cannot appropriate a gospel promise to themselves. Like Job of old they say: *If I had called and He had answered me, yet would I not believe that He had hearkened unto my voice.*—viii. 16.

Such extreme and exemplary humility asks for and needs a Church ark, and the humble place and privilege of a private passenger. The ark of God that shall outride the deluge. The Church of Christ, in which is found salvation.

I say then that the claims of the Episcopal Church to be such an ark of God, or Church of Christ, endowed with sacraments, absolutions and profitable authority, are for all practical purposes valid.

I leave historians and ecclesiasts to their endless words, and assert that the poor in spirit who seek comfort and salvation through the offices of the Episcopal Church, are as well off in her as they can be in any Church. And since many are profoundly prejudiced against the Church of Rome, I am happy to point all such, to a sure welcome in the Episcopal Church, with sacraments, successions, and authority as good as the best.

4. The Episcopal Church is excellent in her provisions for Christian education and pious drill.

Churches that avowedly receive very young infants as members, must necessarily provide education for these accepted children. Accordingly, the Episcopal Church is characteristically a church for the training of children, just as some sister churches are characteristically *revival churches* for the conversion of grown folk.

In the Prayer-book and Church Almanac you find the

Christian year divided into periods separated by high days —monuments and memorials of Christian story. This Christian calendar agrees very nearly with that of the Roman Church. And he is an unusually well informed Christian who can read over this catalogue of days, and in few words tell the story that each day celebrates! But a birthright Churchman who has been quietly trained in a Church home for fifteen years, will need very little teaching.

In connection with this calendar is a system of lessons, in following which the reader is led through the entire Bible each year, and through its more profitable parts, monthly or oftener.

He who for years has been a Churchman, and yet remains ill-grounded in Scripture, shows himself an unworthy son of a very faithful mother.

By the Lessons, Gospels, Epistles, Psalms, and Collects appointed for special fast or feast days, the events commemorated by that day are wrought into the memory of every worshipper. And by seasons, longer or shorter, of special religious effort and observance, this Church satisfies the want which other churches satisfy by weeks of prayer, protracted meetings, and long revivals.

A good school is a dull place to any visitor who rushes in to find sensation and excitement. He will call it dry and stupid. In like manner, many religious sensation makers and sensation seekers will promptly vote the Church calendar and all its smooth machinery of pious drill, a very dull substitute for a regular, rousing revival. But, in the long run, the Church that steadily trains and teaches will outlive the Church that only arouses and startles. "If ye *continue* in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed."

5. This Church makes a distinction between her Creed as a Church, which all her officers must subscribe, and that much shorter declaration of faith which she expects from her children.

This Church never vexes her converts with profound questions in theology. Of those who would receive the Lord's Supper she requires that they repent them truly of their former sins: steadfastly purposing to lead a new life. That they have a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ, and a thankful remembrance of his death, and they be in charity with all men.

To any and to all such, asking no further questions, this catholic and most generous Church approaches, and by the hand of her priest gives the consecrated bread with benediction. "The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life. Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart by faith, with thanksgiving." And with like words the consecrated wine: "Drink this in remembrance that Christ's blood was shed for thee—and be thankful."

Citizens and Christians, all: Because this Episcopal Church is a reformed Church and not revolutionary; because her Book of Prayer is rich and venerable above all in the English tongue; because her ritual promises decency, dignity, prosperity, and permanence; because her historic union through the Apostles with Christ comforts and satisfies so many souls; because she adopts her infant children, and provides for them education and drill; and because, with large hospitality, she proffers her sacrament to all true believers of every name; therefore from her own Psalter let us take the words wherewith to bless her: "They shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and plenteousness within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions' sakes I will wish thee prosperity. Yea, because of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek to do thee good."



A SERMON  
ON THE  
PLAN OF SALVATION.

BY  
ISAAC ERRETT.



CINCINNATI:  
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## VIEWS OF LIFE:

ON THE SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS QUESTIONS OF THE AGE.

BY W. T. MOORE.

THE Publishers desire to call especial attention to this new and valuable work, which has met with a generous reception by the reading public, and has been commended by the entire Eastern and Western Press, some of whose notices we give below.

The work has been carefully prepared, and contains, besides those Addresses which have attained such popularity as to be demanded in book form, several now printed for the first time.

### CONTENTS.

Woman's Sphere and Responsibilities.  
Our Utilitarianism and the Remedy.  
The Present Age, a New Era.  
Success, What it is, and How to Secure it.  
Radicalism and Conservatism.  
Woman—What She is, and how She should be Educated.

The Present Age and its Greatest Need.  
Our Strength and Our Weakness.  
Our Creed—Is it Evangelical?  
Our Practice—Is it Evangelical?  
The Gospel and the Poor.  
Christ, Disturbing and Harmonizing Human Society.

### NOTICES OF THE PRESS.

The author of this volume has attracted a good deal of attention the past twelve months, on account of his earnest appeals for religious tolerance, and his caustic criticisms of the position taken by the Association of Evangelical Ministers of this city, requiring all members of the Association to conform to a Procrustean rule. Mr. Moore held that the only proper test was the Word of God. He is an original thinker, and expresses himself with a good deal of vigor. He is clear and logical, and his style is persuasively eloquent and attractive. The volume embraces views on a wide range of subjects.—*Cincinnati Evening Chronicle*, May 14, 1869.

These Addresses do not discuss questions involving recondite theology, although they evince a deep insight into the doctrine of differences now agitating the world from Rome to Berlin. They are chiefly devoted to the consideration of the questions which, in an ethical point of view, are important to all.—*Cincinnati Enquirer*, May 22, 1869.

Mr. Moore writes in an easy and popular style, and his book will be very acceptable to his many friends and admirers. The volume is issued in a style that does credit to American typography. In fact, a neater volume rarely comes to us with a London imprint.—*Cincinnati Gazette*, May 20, 1869.

A religious feeling runs through these Addresses without flooding them.—*Philadelphia Press*.

The author is an independent thinker, and expresses himself forcibly, without ambiguity or undue prolixity. His themes involve many of the great social, political, and religious problems with which we have to do at the present time, and they are treated without reference to party, sect, or caste. It is worthy of a place in every young man's or young woman's library.—*Gospel Echo*.

The author has selected themes that have a deep present interest and significance. In his handling of these themes, he shows that he is a thoughtful observer of what is taking place in the world in which he lives. His thoughts are those of a receptive active mind; his culture that of a good general scholar, all set forth in strong and earnest language. The Addresses can hardly have failed to stimulate those to whom they were originally delivered to mental activity and moral seriousness. They will be welcomed by a wide circle of readers.—*Christian Standard*, May 18, 1869.

The literary refinement and originality of thought in these addresses are marked features, and at once place the writer in the literary galaxy of the best magazine composers of the present age. The Addresses are preëminently practical; and the very fact that Mr. Moore grapples with the living issues of the present day, and boldly investigates every question relating to the amelioration of the human family, proves that he reaches far beyond the mere honor of a literary fame. The dominant prevailing thought in all these addresses is to correct the wrongs of society, to discover the religious, and moral, and educational disorders of the living world, and to prescribe the remedy; and on this account, if from no other, this fragrant offering should be patronized by all lovers of good order and a high state of morals. The author is a radical reformer, and aims at the extirpation of every social and religious wrong.—*American Christian Review*, June 4, 1869.

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# THE PLAN OF SALVATION.\*

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BY ISAAC ERRETT.

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“For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, erring, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. But when the goodness and love (philanthropia, love of God to man as man) of God our Saviour appeared, not on account of works of righteousness which we did, but in virtue of his mercy he saved us, by the washing (laver) of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a trustworthy saying, and this I will that thou affirm constantly (strongly), that (in order that) they who have believed in God may be careful to maintain good works.”—TITUS iii: 3-9.

JUST now, when an unusual religious interest pervades the community, and hundreds are inquiring the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward, it is important to furnish clear and ample instruction to inquirers, such as may lead them into an acquaintance with “the whole counsel of God.” Then their faith will stand, “not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God,” and they will receive the message of salvation “not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh in believers.”

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\* This Sermon was delivered December 19th, 1869, in the Christian Chapel, Corner of Eighth and Walnut Streets, Cincinnati, Ohio, in view of an unusual religious interest prevailing at the time in the city. This will explain one or two local allusions in the discourse.

We design, therefore, to present as fully as it can be done within the limits of a sermon of reasonable length, an outline of the plan of salvation. In order to do this, let us consider

I. WHAT GOD HAS DONE TO SAVE SINNERS.

II. WHAT MEN MAY DO FOR THEIR FELLOWS IN THE MATTER OF SALVATION.

III. WHAT EVERY SINNER IS REQUIRED TO DO FOR HIMSELF, IN ORDER TO BE SAVED.

IV. WHAT GOD PROPOSES YET TO DO, IN US AND FOR US.

We assume, in these inquiries, that man is sinful, and needs salvation; that his spiritual nature is lost, and needs recovery; that the soul is inharmonious in its relations to the spiritual universe, and must be reconciled to its eternal and immutable order. We attempt not to prove this. We speak, to-day, for such as know it and feel it. We merely remark, in passing, that the religious history of our race groans under the weight of evidence that man is, and ever has been, bewildered in strange labyrinths, and sighs with great and eloquent anguish, and almost despair, over his great guilt, confusion, and helplessness. The first verse of our text presents a moral portrait with which the experience of the present generation so entirely accords, that the verisimilitude will be acknowledged by general consent. We accept the sad, stern facts, and desire to turn our eyes to the "everlasting hills, whence cometh all our help," for succor and deliverance.

I. WHAT HAS GOD DONE TO SAVE SINNERS?

Our text assures us that no works of ours can procure salvation, but points us to the "kindness," "philanthropy," and "mercy" of God, as the fountain of salvation: "good-



ness"—that goodness which "openeth its hand and satisfieth the desire of every living thing," gives us some ground to hope that the soul's desires will not be disregarded by Him who hears the young ravens when they cry; but the "philanthropy"—the love of God to man *because he is man*—which the Gospel reveals, is a sweeter, richer, brighter light; while the "mercy," whose unsearchable riches are offered in the Gospel, carries us beyond all doubt, and lifts us to a rapturous view of the saving grace of God. We are saved, then, if saved at all, by grace—because God is good, and compassionates us in our sin and wretchedness, and out of his own infinite delight in goodness has given us "the knowledge of salvation in the remission of sins," "that we, being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might serve him, without fear, in righteousness and holiness before him, all the days of our life."

Were we indulging in a minute view of the details of this plan of salvation, we should traverse the Old Testament history, and show how an Invisible Hand guided all the events of the ages, for four thousand years, to a grand consummation in the advent of the Messiah; how heaven and earth—men and angels—were laid under tribute to forward this divine scheme, and how the very sins and apostasies of our race were made subservient to the gracious purposes of divine philanthropy. But, passing this, we observe:

I. *That the grace of God was revealed in giving his Son—IMMANUEL, GOD WITH US—to develop this salvation to us.*

"God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have eternal life." The sighs of the ages were answered in an incarnation of Deity that brings to man, on the plane of his own weak and sorrowful existence, the knowledge,

the mercy, and the strength which he needs. "God is in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." It is the culmination of God's gracious purposes—the grandest climax of divine philanthropy—the exhaustion of heaven's munificence; so that, when the work of the Son of God is done, the sublime utterance of his breaking heart on the cross—"It is finished"—announces that the dying sufferer has gained the deepest depth of woe, and the highest summit of goodness, that can ever illustrate the power of God to save.

2. *The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, render this grace of God accessible to us.*

It is not the grace of God, hidden in the depth of his eternal counsels, that saves us; nor yet a grace secretly distilling its power on the human heart, in ways inscrutable. It is the grace of God "*appearing* to all men"—grace *revealed* in the life, teachings, conflicts, sorrows, death, and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. "Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." We learn from his lips what we need to know about sin and redemption; about life, death, and resurrection; about the feelings of God toward his sinful creatures, and his designs in their behalf; about the connection between character and destiny; about the terms on which God will receive us—and the kind of life we must live so as to please Him: all these things, in reference to which we were groping in thick darkness, he has made plain to us, so that "the common people" may "hear him gladly," and learn the way of life. Moreover, his own life, under the heaviest pressure of human woe, was so perfect and triumphant an exemplification of obedience to the will of God, that the helpless soul, touched by it, springs into new life, and learns how, by God's help, to overcome the world.

But not only is there light in the darkness, but a rock in the waves. The things most desired, but most uncertain,

are *demonstrated* in this wonderful mission of Jesus. He did not theorize—he demonstrated. He did not speculate on the possibility of God's love—he *loved*; he wrought out the most amazing mercy for men, before their eyes. He unfolded no psychological theory as to the capacity of the soul for virtue and truth—he took our weak and weary nature into the thickest of the fight with powers of darkness, and led it, over perilous paths, along the brink of fearful precipices, and through the heat of bitterest contests, to perfect victory, and taught men that human nature could be made triumphant over hell. He gave no philosophy of atonement; but, taking our guilt-laden and shame-burdened nature, he hesitated not to bear it to God, though on the way he met the angel of Justice, with flaming sword, and it cost him bloody sweat, and awful agony, and bitter cries, and untold shame, and ignominious death, to maintain this fellowship with our dishonored race, and bear his plea for their restoration to completion; and he came out from the toils and sufferings of this ministry, covered with scars, with pierced hands and feet and side, a “man of sorrows” as none had ever been before; but he came out with a shout of triumph on his lips—still holding our imperiled nature in his covenant grasp, with its chains broken, its guilt expiated, its curse removed. He “bore our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sin, might live unto righteousness.” He broached no doctrine of immortality; but he died and went down to the grave, and fought his last battle in the depths of that fearful empire, and broke the power of death, and led captive captivity, and *demonstrated* his power to redeem from death. He told but little of the world beyond, but he took our ransomed nature into the chariot of God, and ascended with it “far above all might, and dominion, and principalities, and powers,” and placed it on the mediatorial throne, in immortal partnership

with Deity. In his ascension he completed the line of communication between the stormy Atlantic of human sin and strife, and the Pacific ocean of God's redeeming love; and when he lifted the silver hammer, and drove the golden spike that fastened the last rail in this grand highway, the bells rung round all worlds, and the universe thrilled with unusual joy.

It is said, that on one occasion a gentleman came to London to obtain a loan. He was a stranger; and, although offering ample securities, he could not succeed. In his despair, he called on one of the Rothschilds, and laid his case before him. "I am not in that line of business," said Mr. R., "or I would accommodate you. But, come, I will walk down street with you." They went arm in arm along the great thoroughfares, and when it was known that Rothschild was his friend, the loan was instantly secured. And when God and man go arm in arm along the highways of the universe, every angel-crown is lifted to do honor to the friend of God, and our bankrupt nature steps at once into wealth and grandeur. So we build on a rock. No mere dreams, or wishes, or fancies beguile us; nor does any deceitful philosophy bewilder us. We build on *facts*, we walk by *faith*, we find peace in resting on a perfected work of redemption. Through this blessed ministry of Jesus, God takes us by the hand and leads us out of ignorance, and wickedness, and doubt, and despair, into a delightful knowledge of his goodness, holiness, and mercy, into blessed forgiveness of sin, into firm reliance on his love, and a cheerful hope of eternal life; and all the way, as he leads us, he looks on us through human eyes, distills his compassion on us in human tears, fights our battles in a human form, speaks to us in a human voice, and shows us the imprint of human footsteps in all the strange pathway from our lowest weakness to heaven's highest glory. Well may we

say, in depositing our destiny in the hands of this Saviour, "I know in whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep what I have committed to him against the last day."

I am aware that to many thoughtful minds many troublesome questions arise as to this mission. They are dazzled by its brightness. They find it difficult to believe that God *so* loves this sinful race inhabiting this insignificant world; and they can not understand why Jesus should have to go down to death, nor how his death can be an atonement for sin. No doubt there are perplexities here, as every-where. There are unsolved mysteries in our own being, and in the conditions of our existence; and in any path of psychological investigation we can push our inquiries into the unknown, until our *whys* echo through the darkness and bring back no reply. We can not, of course, discuss such questions now. We only suggest briefly a few reflections for this class.

(1) Spirit is infinitely more valuable than matter; and the value of souls is not to be counterpoised by the weight of material worlds. Otherwise a pound of pig-metal would outweigh the genius of Shakespeare, and a block of marble or a roll of canvas have more value than the immortal forms which the genius of an Angelo, a Canova, or a Rubens has wrought on them.

(2) All worlds and universes may be learning lessons from God's dealings with our race. This world of ours may be only a blackboard in God's great school-house, and through the problems wrought on it of human nature, good and evil, life and death, may be made known "to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places the manifold wisdom of God."

(3) Love, in its essential nature, prompts to vicarious suffering. It can not exist in behalf of suffering objects,

and not seek to assume their suffering and carry their woe. Nothing so glorifies human nature as unselfish suffering for others. It is utterly incredible that God could love us and not seek to descend into the depth of our sorrow and helplessness in just that way that would bring him home to our hearts most tenderly and demonstratively. Say what we will in the way of theoretical justice, Love, intuitively grasping the extent and depth of our calamity, silences all our syllogisms, overrides all our narrow reasonings, and puts to shame all our heartless speculations, by a heroic self-sacrifice which gains the end, and is its own best vindication. Melted hearts, quickened souls, ransomed natures, transformed lives, are the unanswerable vindication of the doctrine of the cross.

3. *The Holy Spirit carries forward this work of grace.*

It was expedient that the personal Saviour should be withdrawn from human sight, and carry on his mediatorial work away from human gaze. It was needful, therefore, that another divine agency should be employed to make this salvation available to man. "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you; and when he is come, he will convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment" (John xvi: 7, 8).

*The Holy Spirit is the great Revealer*—putting into words all that is needful to be known of the redemption-work of Christ, and confirming it by miraculous attestations.

As this is to be a salvation for all nations and all ages, this Spirit has a perpetual mission; *and is in the word and in the Church*, a living, enlightening, quickening, regenerating potency; so that we are saved by "the renewing of the Holy Spirit."

We have, then,

- (1) The grace of God.
- (2) The redemption that is in Christ Jesus.
- (3) The renewing of the Holy Spirit.

Such is a brief, but we trust definite, view of what God has done to save us. We inquire

## II. WHAT MAY MAN DO FOR HIS FELLOWS IN THIS MATTER OF SALVATION?

This may seem to some a strange inquiry, since they have been accustomed to regard man as entirely passive in regeneration. But it is worthy of note that *this grace of God flows through human channels, or it flows not at all.*

When God came to save man, he came in the form of a man, and put forth his grace through a human organism.

When the Holy Spirit came to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, he came *to the Apostles*, and put forth his converting power through their ministry. "I will send him *unto you* ; and when he is come *to you*, he will convince *the world*," etc. (John xvi : 7, 8).

When the Spirit would instruct the Ethiopian eunuch, he said *unto Philip*, "Go and join thyself to this chariot." And Philip converted him (Acts viii : 29-40).

When the angel came to Cornelius, he would not tell him of the salvation of God, but said, "Send for Peter ; he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do" (Acts x : 5, 6) ; and Peter taught him the way of life.

When our Lord appeared to Saul of Tarsus, he would not reveal to him the way of salvation, but told him to go to Damascus, and there it should be made known to him. Ananias was sent to acquaint him with the will of God (Acts xxii : 10-16).

It is not the grace of God in *His* heart, but in the *sinner's* heart, that saves. It is not the love of God in the suffering Jesus at Calvary that subdues the heart; but that love and that suffering understood and appreciated by the sinner. It is not the Holy Spirit, invisible, inaudible, and intangible, that regenerates; but the truth which that Spirit reveals; so that we are "born again by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."

Now between that heart of God—that cross of Christ—that invisible Spirit, and our alienated hearts, some *ministry* must come in to carry to us the knowledge and the grace, and to plead with us to be reconciled to God. *That ministry is always a human ministry.* So entirely true is this, that where there is no human ministry, as in heathen lands, there is no knowledge of Jesus, the cross has no power, and the Holy Spirit accomplishes no mission of conviction.

Here, then, is what a man may do for his fellows. He may

"Tell to dying sinners round,  
What a blest Saviour he has found."

He may instruct, persuade, entreat, until he prevails, in writing on their hearts the covenant of God's love. It may be the ministry of the parent, the Sunday-school teacher, the preacher, the friend, the neighbor, the citizen; it may be performed by reading, by conversation, indorsed by deeds of kindness and a holy life, or by public preaching; but through whatever direct or indirect means, it is the duty of every Christian to perform this ministry to the full extent of his or her ability, and bring the ignorant, and sinful, and careless into contact with the truth and grace of God. Hence, while conversion is a divine work, it is also (instrumentally) a human work (James v: 19, 20. Acts xxvi: 16-18. 1 Cor. iv: 15).



While, therefore, we *pray* for all men, we must also *work* to bring them to Christ.

We inquire

### III. WHAT MUST THE SINNER DO TO BE SAVED?

I am aware of a prevalent impression that salvation is something wrought in us—that we are passive recipients of converting grace—that we can only watch and wait for the tokens of God's presence and power, and the inner revelation of his forgiving mercy. Let me quote from the *Westminster Confession of Faith*, chapter x:

All those whom God hath predestinated unto life, *and those only*, he is pleased, in his appointed and accepted time, *effectually to call* by his word and Spirit, out of that state of sin and death in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ; enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God; taking away their heart of stone, and giving unto them a heart of flesh; renewing their wills, and by his almighty power determining them to that which is good, and *effectually drawing* them to Jesus Christ; yet so as they come most freely, being made willing by his grace.

This effectual call is of God's free and special grace alone, not from any thing at all foreseen in man; *who is altogether passive therein*, until, being renewed by the Holy Spirit, he is thereby enabled to answer this call, and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed in it.

And in *Fisher's Catechism* (Part II, pp. 141-2), under question 89 of the Shorter Catechism, we have the following statement of doctrine:

*Ques.* 40. Is there any difference between conversion and regeneration?

*Ans.* They are as inseparably conjoined as the effect is to its cause. Regeneration, or the formation of the new creature (in

which we are wholly passive), is the cause; and conversion, or the motion of the soul to God, is the effect which infallibly follows.

Q. 41. Can not man be the author of his own conversion?

A. No: *He can neither prepare himself for it, nor co-operate with God in it.*

Q. 42. Why can he not prepare himself for it?

A. Because "the carnal mind is enmity against God," and remains so until regenerating grace takes place in the soul.

Q. 43. Why can not man co-operate with God in this work?

A. Because there can be no acting without a principle of action. Regeneration being the infusing of spiritual life into the soul, it is impossible the creature can co-operate or concur with God in it, *any more than Lazarus in his grave could concur in his own resurrection*, till the powerful voice of Christ infused life and strength into him.

This is the stumbling block in the path of thousands of honest inquirers. If they are literally *dead*, and as passive and helpless as Lazarus in the grave, what can they do? And what is the use of preaching or expostulation? Preach to Lazarus in the sepulcher! Call on him to awake and arise! Threaten him with eternal ruin if he does not arise! Hold protracted meetings to advance his resurrection! The absurdity of this is at once apparent.

Let me say, that a man may be dead in one sense and alive in another. "Let the dead bury their dead." The dead first mentioned were in that sense alive that they could bury their dead. "She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." A man "dead in trespasses and sins," is in this sense alive, *that he can sin*; and in sinning *he exercises the very same faculties and powers that are exercised in spiritual life*; only it is a perverted exercise of these powers. Death, then, is used figuratively, to describe

the alienation of the soul from God—its separation from the true joys of divine fellowship. But, though dead in sin, man has a brain, a heart, a conscience, a will, loves and hates, hopes and fears ; only they are perverted. He is able to see, hear, understand, believe, feel, and act ; and *it is through the natural channels to the soul that God proposes to convey his regenerating grace*. Thus said Jesus : "This people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest at any time they should see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them" (Matthew xiii : 15). Do you say it is a divine work to open their eyes and ears ? I answer, it is a *human* work likewise. "I send thee to the Gentiles," said the Lord to Saul, "*to open their eyes*, to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God" (Acts xxvi : 17, 18). It is, therefore, an unauthorized straining of a figure of speech, for the sake of logical consistency in a theological system, that leads to this false and most mischievous conclusion.

There is a passive form given, in our common version, to an active verb, which seems to strengthen this error. We read *be converted* where we ought to read *convert* or *turn*. For instance, in a text already quoted (Matthew xiii : 15), lest they should understand with their heart and *be converted*, ought to read *and turn*. And in Acts iii : 19 : "Repent ye, therefore, and *be converted*, that your sins may be blotted out, *when* the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord," ought to read : "Repent, therefore, *and turn*, that your sins may be blotted out, and *that times of refreshing may come* from the presence of the Lord." As I am stating what is now universally conceded by all competent scholars, it is not necessary to go into an argument to prove it. The difference between the

readings is apparent at a glance. According to one, sinners are exhorted to passive submission in order to conversion *when* it shall please God to visit them. According to the other, they are commanded at once to turn to God, that the promised blessing may be theirs. One represents God's delay as the cause of the delay of the sinner's conversion; the other represents the sinner's delay in turning, as the cause of the delay of God's blessing. The latter is, beyond all controversy, the true idea.

But without entering into any elaborate argument on this point, I remark (1), that sinners are commanded *to save themselves* (Acts ii: 40); and (2), that when sinners cried out to know what they must *do* to be saved, they were always told of something to be done on their part, and were never encouraged to think that they could wait in passivity for the salvation of God. God deals with us in harmony with the laws of our rational nature. He respects the constitutional guaranties of that nature. He stands at the door and knocks (Rev. iii: 20). He will not go in another way, nor will he break open the door. "If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in." That God deals with us in accordance with the faculties and rights of our rational nature, throws on us the responsibility of acting a part worthy of that nature. If God speaks, we are under obligations to hear; if he testifies, we must attend to the testimony submitted; if he shows to us great mercy, it is ours to receive it into our hearts; if he commands, it belongs to us to obey. What, then, we ask, does God command the sinner to do?

1. *He must hear.* "Incline your ear and come unto me; *hear, and your soul shall live.*" "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." We must give attention—honest attention—to God's message. Unless we consent to bring

an honest heart to the consideration of God's truth, not one step can be taken toward conversion; and we dare to say, that no grace of God or power of his Spirit, will ever visit a heart that abandons itself to dishonest motives. "How can you believe who receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only?" It is in the power of every man to shut out God from his soul forever. It is also in the power of every man, to whom the Gospel comes, to receive God, in saving power, into his soul, and share the blessedness of divine life. Grace may provide food for a starving man, but *he* must eat it or starve. It is not vengeance that warns him: "He that eateth not shall die." Nor is it vengeance that says: "He that believeth not shall be damned." It is not too much to ask that, in order to be saved, the sinner shall give honest and earnest heed to the message of salvation, and even part with all else, that he may secure this "pearl of great price."

2. *He must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.* "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." This is the first answer to a sinner who has as yet taken no step toward conversion, other than to be alarmed at his condition. As the diseased man, ignorant and helpless, puts his life into the hands of a physician, and trusts it there, ready to hear his counsels, and do his bidding, so the diseased soul is required to trust the Great Physician, acknowledging his power to save, and ready to obey his voice.

Here, again, we are met with a serious difficulty. Faith, we are told, is the gift of God—a special product of the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart; and can not, therefore, be a *duty* on the part of the sinner, since he is entirely incapable of believing. The *Westminster Confession of Faith* (chapter xiv) says:

The grace of faith, whereby the elect are enabled to believe to the saving of their souls, is the work of the Spirit of Christ in their hearts, and is ordinarily wrought by the ministry of the word; by which, also, and by the administration of the sacraments and prayer, it is increased and strengthened.

*Fisher's Catechism* (Part II, p. 125) says:

*Ques.* 10. Why is this faith, described in the answer, called a grace?

*Ans.* Because it is the gift of God, freely bestowed upon the sinner (Eph. ii: 8), who has no antecedent worth, value, or good qualification, of which he can boast (1 Cor. iv: 7).

If this be taken as true doctrine, it is impossible to escape the conclusion that no man can believe until it pleases God to make him believe; and the responsibility of the sinner for continuing in a state of unbelief, can not be fairly charged to his account. Who can defend, in this view, the justice of the declaration, "He that believeth not, shall be damned"? Let us look carefully at the passage referred to:

For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast (Eph. ii: 8, 9).

Does Paul refer to *faith*, or to *salvation*, as the gift of God? We can scarcely suspect him to be guilty of so idle an utterance as that *faith* is "not of works;" but he loses none of his gravity or his dignity in affirming that *salvation* is not of works, but of faith. Now, whatever it is that is not of works, that is "the gift of God." The grammatical construction of the sentence forbids us to understand *touto* (that) as standing for *pistis* (faith), since *touto* is in the neuter gender, and *pistis* is feminine. The rela-

tive, as Chandler observes, has the whole sentence that goes before it for its antecedent. The meaning, therefore, is clear: this salvation by grace is the gift of God, and is realized through faith, and not through works, so that there is no occasion of boasting.

The other text referred to in the quotation we have given, is still less satisfactory:

For who maketh thee to differ? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now, if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it? (1 Cor. iv: 7.)

Paul, in speaking of the apostles as *stewards*, intrusted with the treasures of heavenly wisdom for the benefit of others, argues that men in such *stewardship* have no right to aspire to *leadership*, forgetting their subordinate position and perverting their trust into an occasion of gratifying ambition. But what has this to do with the faith which the sinner is required to exercise?

The Apostle says, indeed, to the Philippians: "To you it is given, in behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his name" (i: 29); but surely no one will contend that sufferings were the direct gift of God. The opportunity to believe, and the opportunity to suffer, were given to the Philippians.

But, apart from the criticism of particular texts, let us look at the general teaching of the Scriptures as to the means by which sinners were led to believe.

Of John the Baptist it is said: "The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, *that all men through him might believe*" (John i: 7). Here faith was to be produced by the testimony of John, heard, understood, and accepted.

In the case of the Samaritan woman, who brought her neighbors to Christ, we read: "And many of the Samari-

tans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, who testified, He told me all that ever I did. So when the Samaritans were come to him, they besought him that he would tarry with them: and he abode there two days. And many more believed because of his own word; and said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world" (John iv: 39-42). Here it is evident that faith was created by the evidence presented.

"And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written, *that ye might believe* that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John xx: 30, 31). It is vain to submit these evidences, if there is no capacity on the part of the sinner to believe the testimony when it is furnished.

Of the Bereans it is said: "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so. *Therefore* many of them believed" (Acts xvii: 11). "Many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized" (Acts xviii: 8). "For whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? *and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?* and how shall they hear without a preacher? . . . But they have not all obeyed the Gospel. For Isaiah saith, Lord, who hath *believed* our report? *So then, faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*" (Rom. x: 13-17).

Faith, then, can not be the gift of God in any sense that can justify the sinner in waiting, in mere passivity, for a divine work to be wrought in his soul by a special visita-



tion of the Holy Spirit. If faith comes by hearing, by searching the Scriptures, by an honest examination of the claims of Jesus, then this attentive hearing must be given. Let us not be understood as affirming, that a mere intellectual assent to the teachings of the Bible is to be accepted as faith. Faith in the Lord Jesus is not like faith in a mere historical statement concerning Hannibal or Napoleon, or an assent to a fact of ordinary occurrence. The difference, however, is not in the method of believing, but in the nature of the things believed. Faith in a historical statement that does not personally concern us, is merely a question of evidence; and the moral nature has nothing, perhaps, to do with it. But faith in Jesus involves grave moral consequences. It involves a disruption of the ties that bind us to evil; a renunciation of the sins that have enslaved us; a crucifixion of the flesh with its desires and lusts; a forsaking of all other lordships, for the lordship over conscience and life of this Son of God. An unwillingness to accept these legitimate results of faith in the Christ, may lead us to deal dishonestly with the evidence he brings us, to refuse attention to his claims, to quench our best convictions of truth. It is a moral struggle. He who believes in Jesus, therefore, believes *with the heart*; accepts, in his moral nature, the honest results of the truth concerning the Saviour. His deliberate acceptance of the truth concerning the Christ, is a triumph over the evil that is in him; a subjugation of his rebellious nature to the power of the truth of God. It is in view of this *moral* aspect of faith that it is said, "He that believeth not shall be damned."

There is no more conscious act of selfhood, therefore, than this of believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, as the result of honest attention to the truth of the Gospel. In the very nature of things it is essential to the enjoyment of

the blessings of salvation, not only because it alone can connect us with the unseen, and enable us to realize the power of an invisible Saviour, but because, until we come into such an honest fellowship with truth as to accept all the consequences of faith in Christ, it is impossible that the soul can be prepared to accept the spiritual treasures of the grace of God. Hence, "without faith it is impossible to please God."

3. *He must repent.* "God now commandeth all men, every-where, to repent" (Acts xvii: 30). "Repent, and turn, that your sins may be blotted out" (Acts iii: 19.) Sin must be put away. Wrongs must be righted. The affections and sympathies must be withdrawn from all that is evil. We must deny ungodliness and worldly lusts. The will must own the sovereignty of the will of God. It is no difference what it costs. We must pluck out the right eye, if need be, or cut off the right hand, and enter into life halt and maimed, rather than, having two eyes and two hands, to be cast into hell fire. The puling, cowardly soul, that will not wrestle with its sins, and uncoil the serpents of evil that are crushing out its life, can not be saved. The demand of the Gospel is uncompromising.

4. *He must confess Christ before men.* "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved; for with the heart man believeth into righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made into salvation" (Romans x: 9, 10). In the mighty controversy going on between heaven and hell, we are not allowed to proclaim neutrality, nor to withhold our suffrages from Him to whom we look for redemption.

5. *He must be baptized, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins.* "Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remis-

sion of sins" (Acts ii : 38). "Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts xxii : 16). "Go, teach all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew xxviii : 19). We are saved, according to our text, "by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Spirit." "Baptism doth now save us," says Peter, "through the resurrection of Jesus Christ ;" and this salvation he declares to be, "the answer of a good conscience toward God" (1 Peter iii : 21). As we have *bodies* as well as *spirits*, we must have *ordinances* as well as *principles*. As the body is to share in the service and in the salvation, so it must share in the consecration. And as, in the consecration, *the whole spiritual nature* is given up to be immersed in the love of God, so the *whole physical man* is given up to be immersed in water, that thus, through faith, repentance, and baptism, the whole internal and external man may be made over to God in an everlasting covenant.

To guard against erroneous representations on this point, it may be well to say that the Scriptures attach no miraculous, regenerating efficacy to the waters of baptism. No one has a right to come to baptism who is not already a believer and a penitent. It has no value, except as an act of faith, and derives its efficacy from the faith of the subject in the promises of God, and the honesty of his purpose to forsake sin and walk in obedience to the Lord. It does not *procure* pardon. Our reliance for pardon is in "the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world ;" in his death for our sins, and his resurrection for our justification. There is, there can be, no merit either in the faith or the obedience which we render. But it has pleased our gracious God to appoint *conditions* of salvation, by accepting which, we may *personally appropriate* the blessings

which the mercy of God offers to all. These conditions are wisely and mercifully adapted to our nature and our condition. Faith and repentance subdue the spirit to the will of God; baptism is adapted to our material nature, and enables us, in a sensible and evident submission to divine authority, to testify to others our conversion, and to appropriate to ourselves the promises which have been connected with "the obedience of faith." Read again the passages which we have quoted concerning baptism, and you will see how, as we come, step by step, to accept the Gospel conditions of faith, repentance, confession, baptism, we are permitted to take the promises which are coupled with these conditions and call them ours. Thus our assurance of pardon and adoption rests on no mere emotion, or dream, or imagination, which, departing, leaves us again in darkness; but on the unchanging promise of God, and our consciousness of having complied with the conditions to which the promise is annexed. The obedient subject of the Gospel says, I have believed; I have repented; I have confessed the Lord Jesus; I have been buried with him by immersion into death, and have risen with him to a new life: his promise is mine; "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."

6. *He must continue to walk in the commandments of Jesus.* As our inquiries to-day relate mainly to a present salvation from sin, we can say but little on this last point, important as it is. But we are careful to say, that, however complete our present salvation, it must yield fruit in a persevering obedience to the will of God—in a new life of righteousness and holiness—or we fail of the grace of God, and, like the Israelites, though saved out of Egypt, reach not the promised land. "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life."

IV. WHAT DOES GOD PROPOSE YET TO DO, IN US AND FOR US?

1. "I will be merciful to your unrighteousness, and your sins and iniquities I will remember no more" (Heb. viii: 12).

2. "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people" (Heb. viii: 10). "I will be a Father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (1 Cor. vii: 18).

3. "You shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts ii: 38). "Because you are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal. iv: 6). "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God" (Rom. viii: 16). "Strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man" (Eph. iii: 16). "It is God that worketh in you to will and to work of his own good pleasure" (Phil. ii: 13).

4. "If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. viii: 17). So says our text: "That being justified freely by his grace, we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." "He that keepeth my sayings shall never see death."

Do you still tremble in doubt? Then remember *that this is the only sure refuge*. Should Atheism prove true, the Christian is not the loser. He goes by the pleasantest route to the land of darkness, and sinks in the abyss of nothingness without knowing it. Should Deism prove true, and all men reach immortality through the operation of natural laws, he is saved with the rest. Universalism does not imperil his hopes. Spiritualism will admit him, as a true Christian, to the highest sphere of light. Calvinism will not shut out any man of pure heart and holy life. If "faith alone" justifies, surely faith *and its fruits* will not condemn. Why, then, risk the soul on uncertainties, which, at best, bring no gain, which, at worst, involve eternal loss?

Why seek to cross the fearful chasm on a single rope, even with the best balance-pole that any system can furnish, and take one chance in a thousand of safety, when there is in reach a suspension-bridge—a highway of faith and holiness—over which you may certainly pass to the land of eternal blessedness? “Our rock is not as their rock, our enemies themselves being judges.”

Can heaven grant more? Pardon, peace, sonship, divine guidance and strength, victory over the world, victory over death, immortality, eternal riches and honors, sweet peace and rest, and boundless love and joy; the loftiest dignities and delights to which created intelligences can aspire! How poor is earth! How fleeting its joys and its honors! What baubles are its greatest treasures! What conflict, and pain, and grief, and anguish are here! How earth’s beauty fades, and its pleasures vanish, and its loves and hopes perish! “What shadows we are, and what shadows we pursue!”

“Born, living, dying,  
Leaving the still shore for the troubled wave;  
Battling with storm-clouds, over shipwrecks flying,  
And casting anchor in the silent grave.”

But there is an endless life; and there is a path that leads to it, and a hand to guide us in the way, and a fountain of mercy at its entrance, where every sin-sick soul may wash and be cleansed in the blood of the Lamb, and be robed in a clean white pilgrim-robe for the journey; and a covenant-keeping God to protect and to strengthen us on the way; and a divine light—a pillar of cloud and fire—to go before us; and waters in the desert; and manna from heaven; and, now and then, bunches of grapes from the land of promise; and a high-priest at Jordan to divide the waters; and bright throngs of ransomed ones waiting for us over the river. Will you go? “Whoever will, let him come.”

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NATURE A PLEDGE OF GRACE.

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A SERMON

SUGGESTED BY THE

Transit of Venus,

DECEMBER 6TH, 1882.

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Compliments of the Author.



Nature a Pledge of Grace.

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A SERMON

SUGGESTED BY THE

TRANSIT OF VENUS, DECEMBER 6TH, 1882.

DELIVERED IN THE MEETING HOUSE OF THE

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA,

*ON THE EVENING OF THE SAME DAY.*

---

By GEORGE DANA BOARDMAN,

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# NATURE A PLEDGE OF GRACE.

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*Thus saith the Lord, If ye can break My covenant of the day, and My covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season; then may also My covenant be broken with David My servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne.—Jeremiah xxxiii. 20, 21.*

TO-DAY has occurred an event of rare **The Transit of Venus.** spectacular interest; it was the transit of Venus. It was an event of great importance in the astronomical world: for transit observations have for their object the more accurate determination of the sun's horizontal parallax, and hence the earth's distance from the sun, and from that the respective distances from the sun of all the other planets; in other words, the dimensions of the solar system. The transit will not occur again till June 7th, 2004; an interval of one hundred and twenty-one years and a half. No wonder that countless eyes in various parts of the world have been gazing to-day with intense interest on the rare and important phenomenon.

But it is not my purpose to deliver an astronomical lecture. My purpose is even loftier; namely, to unfold and apply a great moral lesson which the transit of Venus suggests and confirms.

**The Transit an instance of Nature's Stability.**

First of all, then, let me call your particular attention to this great fact: The ability to predict the transit of Venus was based on the stability of natural law. The transit was not an accident. Science knows no accidents. The transit was a natural event, occurring in due order of nature. For nature has its order, and that order is inexorable. Completely learn that order, and you shall completely recite nature's past, and completely foretell nature's future. Hence the favorite saying of Auguste Comte: "Science; whence prescience," that is, pre-science.

**Distinguish Law and Force.**

In fact, so universal and inflexible is natural law felt to be, that many of the votaries of science actually worship it, knowing no God but nature. They make the profound mistake of failing to distinguish between law and force. A law of nature in and by itself is not a force, it is only a statement of the way in which force works. For example: The law of gravity is not the same as the force of gravity: the law of gravity is simply a brief and comprehensive phrase, declaring the mode and rule according to which the gravitating force invariably works. The phrase does not answer such questions as the following:



“Why does the gravitating force invariably work according to this invariable rule? Why does every particle of matter in the universe inexorably tend to every other particle, mutually attracting and being mutually attracted with a force proportional directly to the quantity of their matter, and inversely to the squares of their distances? How comes it that what we call the gravitating force invariably works according to a definite, unalterable rule, which rule we call the law of gravity?” The atheist can not answer these questions. The Christian can. He believes that every atom in the universe inexorably tends to every other atom, because God, when He created these atoms, intended that they should always thus tend to each other. He believes that this invariable tendency of every atom to every other atom is as much the result of God’s will as was the original creation of these atoms. All matter has this tendency, because this tendency is a part of God’s settled plan, being one of His original and continued purposes. And because this tendency is invariable, universal, and ceaseless, men have discovered it, and they call it the law of gravity. I do not object to the phrase, provided it is not used as, alas! it too often is, to exalt law into force and to shut out a personal and ruling God from all connection with matter. The

truth is, this phrase, law of gravitation, means something more than that every atom in the universe tends to every other atom in a definite, invariable way; it also means the original and continued intention of Almighty God that it should be so. And what we affirm of the law of gravity, we affirm of all the laws of nature. They are not self-moving, self-determining forces; they are but certain invariable rules which Deity has chosen to prescribe to Himself, according to which He from the beginning determined that He would govern every atom of matter in the universe. The laws of nature are but the rules which Almighty God, as King of His own realm of matter, has devised and laid down for His own procedure.

**The Laws of Nature  
are God's Covenant  
with Man.**

Or, to put the matter in another way, and in accordance with our text, the laws of nature are God's covenant with man: "If ye can break My covenant of the day, and My covenant of the night." According to Holy Scripture, then, the ordinances of matter, the appointments and arrangements of the material universe, the laws of nature, are not only God's self-prescribed method of procedure; they are also actually His covenant. What we call the law of day and night is really God's promise to give us in

regular succession day and night, God's gracious engagement with man to alternate regularly light and darkness. This, in fact, as He had declared to the patriarch Noah, was what the rainbow should signify :—

Gen. ix. 12-17. This is the token of the covenant which I make between Me and you, and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: My bow I do set in the cloud; and it shall be for a token of a covenant between Me and the earth; and it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud; and I will remember My covenant which is between Me and you and every living being of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh; and the bow shall be seen in the cloud; and I will look upon it, to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.

Not that the rainbow itself was God's covenant that He would never again flood the earth; it was but His appointed token of such a covenant; "My bow I set in the cloud; and it shall be for a covenant-sign between Me and the earth." Accordingly, every time we see it arching the horizon, the God of the rainbow bids us to accept it as His personal pledge that while the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease. The laws of nature, then, are God's covenant with man.

Secret of the Ability  
to Predict the Astrono-  
mical Future.

And just because the laws of nature are God's covenant—in other words, God's self-prescribed rules of procedure—the laws of nature are stable, to be depended on absolutely. Hence the ability to predict, for example, the astronomical future. Precisely because the laws of nature are stable, the astronomer was able to predict that there would be a transit of Venus on December 6th, 1882. Precisely because the laws of nature are stable, the astronomer is able to predict that there will not be another transit of Venus till after an interval of one hundred and twenty-one years and a half. Precisely because the laws of nature are stable, the astronomer is able to predict that, after the next transit of Venus on June 7th, 2004, there will be another transit eight years afterwards, namely, June 5th, 2012. Every one of these predictions is based on the absolute stability of natural law. So supreme was the confidence of the astronomers in the unchangeableness of the laws of nature, so absolute their conviction that Venus would apparently begin to cross the sun's disc at 9 h. 2 m. 45 s. A. M. Philadelphia time, December 6th, 1882, that in order to witness the phenomenon they have not hesitated to make large personal sacrifices, involving months of laborious and costly preparations and long

and perilous journeys to remote and savage spots of earth ; and this, too, in utter ignorance of what the weather would be when the critical moment should arrive. So morally certain were they that the transit would take place at the moment predicted that they hesitated not to risk the elaborate and costly preparations of years and of continents on the chance of a few minutes of fair weather at certain hours on the sixth day of December, 1882. It was a sublime instance of men's faith in nature. And the issue has justified the faith. The transit of Venus has taken place precisely as it had been predicted it would ; and so another august witness took the stand to-day to testify to the unchangeableness of nature's laws, that is to say, to the veracity of God's covenant of nature.

**Meaning of our Text  
for the Jews.**

And now to our text. Our prophet represents God as using the stability of His administration of nature as the pledge of the stability of His administration of grace :—

Thus saith the Lord :—

If ye can break My covenant of the day and My covenant of the night,

So that there should not be day and night in their season :

Then also My covenant with David My servant shall be broken,

That he shall not have a Son to reign upon his throne.

These words were spoken in the darkest period of Hebrew history. The disobedience and obduracy of generations was just issuing in the shame and despair of the Babylonian captivity. But amid this terrible downfall, this apparently hopeless wreck of the Jewish nationality, one blessed memory survived; it was the remembrance of God's covenant with David. More than four centuries before Jeremiah, God, through the mouth of His prophet Nathan, had said to the man after His own heart :—

II. Samuel vii. 12, 13,      When thy days shall be fulfilled, and thou shalt  
Acts ii. 30, 31.      sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy Seed after  
thee, who shall proceed from thy loins, and I will establish His kingdom; He shall build a house for My name; and I will establish the throne of His kingdom forever.

And now, amid the horrors and despair of the Babylonian siege, God would comfort His servant Jeremiah, and the few who, like Jeremiah, had remained loyal, by assuring them that His covenant with David was as inviolable as His covenanted laws of nature :—

Jer. xxxi. 35-37;      Thus saith the Lord :—  
xxxiii. 14-26.      Who appointed the sun for light by day,  
And the ordinances of the moon and the stars for light by night;

Who stirreth up the sea, and its waves roar ;  
The LORD of hosts is His name ;  
If My covenant be not with day and night,  
If I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth ;  
If these ordinances depart from before Me, saith the Lord,  
If ye can break My covenant of the day and of the night,  
So that there should not be day and night in their season :  
Then also shall My covenant with David be broken,  
That no son of his shall reign on his throne.

Thus the God of nature bids His servant Jeremiah accept His inviolable covenant of day and night, of sun and moon and stars—in other words, the stability of nature's law—as the resistless argument for, and the infallible sign and pledge of the stability of His covenant with David. And the issue proved that the covenant of the promised Messiah was as inviolable as the covenant of day and night. Jesus the Christ was born from the loins of David. And as the transit of Venus, after many a year of prediction, proves the inviolability of God's covenant of nature, so the birth of Jesus Christ, of the house and lineage of David, six hundred years after Jeremiah's prophecy, and a thousand years after the original covenant with David, proves the inviolability of God's covenant of grace. And so was fulfilled the blessed Maschil of Ethan the Ezrahite:—

My covenant will I not break,  
 Psalm lxxxix. 34-37. Nor alter what hath gone forth from My lips.  
 Once have I sworn by My holiness :  
 I will not lie unto David.  
 His Seed shall be forever,  
 And His throne as the sun before Me ;  
 As the moon shall it stand fast forever,  
 And as the witness in the skies is faithful.

Having thus explained the prophet's  
 Meaning of our Text words in their bearing on his own country-  
 for Ourselves. men and generation, we are prepared for the general  
 lesson which they teach all lands and all times—it is this :  
 The stability of natural law an argument for and a pledge  
 of the stability of moral law.

No one doubts the stability of natural  
 Stability of Moral Law. law. We talk indeed of breaking the laws  
 of nature, violating the laws of health, and the like. But  
 the language is manifestly loose. By no manner of pos-  
 sibility can we break a single law of nature. It is the  
 laws of nature which, if we do not obey them, break us.  
 For example ; a man lives a life of sensuous excesses  
 and dies. Why does he die ? Because he has broken  
 the laws of health ? No ; he dies because the laws of



health would not be broken, they insisted on having their own way, they broke him. The laws of nature are absolutely inviolable. Think you that the laws of morals are any less inviolable? Shall the God who rules the natural world with a sceptre so sovereign and changeless, rule the spiritual world with a feeble and vacillating wand? While the world of matter is under the reign of law and order, is the world of spirit under the reign of chance and caprice? No; when you can break God's covenant with matter, then, it may be, you can break God's covenant with spirit.

Think not, then, that sin will ever go unpunished. You can no more break God's law of righteousness than you can break God's law of gravitation. Hurl yourself against the law of gravitation by leaping from a pinnacle; do you break the law of gravitation? No; the law of gravitation breaks you, for there you lie, a crushed, dead body. Hurl yourself against the law of righteousness by leaping from the pinnacle of sonship to the eternal Father; do you break the law of righteousness? No; the law of righteousness breaks you, for there you lie a crushed, dead soul. Sin and punishment are as insoluble as cause and effect. True, you may not in every

instance see the punishment: for the consequences of sin, though always inevitable, are not always apparent. As force in nature, although indestructible, is capable of assuming different guises of motion, as, for instance, heat, light, electricity, so the consequences of sin may appear in various forms, either in this world or in the next, either in remorse or in penitence, either in your own person or in the person of Him who Himself bare our sins in His own body on the tree. But whatever the form of the consequence, the law of sin and punishment is as inexorable as the law of cause and effect.

I. Peter ii. 24.

**True of Righteousness.**

And as it is with sin, so it is with righteousness. That every true service for God, the very tiniest as well as the very grandest, shall sooner or later receive its full reward, is as absolutely certain as that God exists. And this for two reasons: First, it is of the very nature of righteousness that it should issue in reward, even as it is of the very nature of cause that it should issue in effect. And, secondly, in addition to the inherent, inviolable nature of righteousness, God has solemnly given His own personal promise in this direction, and this in many an explicit Scripture. Take, for example, the promise of our text. While God's covenant with David, taken in

its literal, technical sense, was a personal, and, so to speak, physiological covenant, meaning the Davidic progenitorship of the promised Messiah or Christ; yet the covenant, taken in its moral, essential sense, was a spiritual covenant, meaning the setting up of a spiritual king-

dom along the line of David's Son and  
Matt. xxii. 41-45.

Lord; a kingdom which should be universal and lasting, because spiritual. Thus interpreted, God's covenant with David was a universal covenant, offered to you and to me as well as to the son of Jesse, and involving all God's promises, even every spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus; for it is in Him who was of the house

and lineage of David that God's promises  
II. Cor. i. 20. are the yea and the amen. And as it

was in the days of Jeremiah, so it is in ours: God still points to His inflexible ordinances of heaven and earth, His unchangeable appointments of sun and moon and stars, His irreversible covenant of day and night, as the pledges of the eternal inviolability of His promises in Jesus Christ. Yes, as certainly as there is a gravitating force which works according to an unchanging law, so certainly will Jesus Christ and whoever is Jesus Christ's yet win a limitless and reverseless triumph; for to this Almighty God has solemnly pledged the very inexorableness of the laws of the

nature He Himself has ordained. Ay, God's covenant of grace is even more certain than God's covenant of nature. Heaven and earth shall yet pass away, but never God's word.

II. Peter iii. 10-13.

The very elements themselves shall melt with fervent heat; but out of the ashes of the wrecked globe shall rise in immortal resurrection the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Less hopeless, then, is it to attempt to reverse the laws of nature than the laws of grace; less absurd to fight against gravitation than against Christianity; less idiotic to undertake to annihilate matter than to avert the coming coronation of the covenanted Son of David.

The great Lesson of  
the Transit.

This then is the great lesson of the transit of Venus—the stability of natural law, the symbol and the pledge of the stability of moral law; or, more briefly, nature a pledge of grace.

Let me conclude with an inference and with a word of cheer.

The Spirit of Prophecy  
the Testimony to  
Jesus.

And, first, the inference. We can not, in the light of our subject, fail to be impressed with the conviction that the prophets of the Old Testament must have been inspired. For, while astronomers base their predictions on ascertained facts and stable

laws, prophets hazarded their predictions on countless unforeseen contingencies. It is evident that a problem is difficult in proportion to the number of elements it involves. Thus, while it is comparatively easy to solve an astronomical problem in which only two mutually attracting bodies are considered, the problem of determining the motions of three mutually attracting masses, or the problem of Three Bodies, as it is called, was one from which even the genius of a Newton recoiled. Amazing as was his analytic power, even Newton was baffled in his attempts to reduce the perturbations of the planets to formulas, pronouncing the problem insoluble, and expressing the apprehension that these, as he supposed, uncalculable perturbations might some day plunge creation into chaos. Nevertheless the genius of subsequent mathematicians has solved this problem of Three Bodies; and this solution was possible, because the laws of the heavenly bodies are stable, and only need to be discovered, in order to our being able to predict the planetary future. In fact, these perturbations themselves are such splendid instances of the stability of natural law that it was on the basis of them that the existence and place of the planet Neptune were predicted before it was discovered by the telescope. On the other hand, man, in distinction from sun and

planet, atom and gravitation, is a living conscious power, endowed with freedom of choice and capacity of will and self-motion. This introduces into the problem of the prophet an element of infinite complexity and uncertainty; it is that most inconstant, capricious, uncalculable of things—human free will. Accordingly, how countless the number, how complicated the unforeseen relations, which a single human will introduces into any single Messianic prophecy, or prediction of the Christ! Doubtless mind has its laws not less than matter. And these laws may be discovered, as indeed many of them have been. But no discovery of the laws of mind, no reduction of them to formulas, no combination of these formulas, can help me as a prophet of a far-off future. I may discover the laws or modes according to which the human will moves; but I can not predict far in advance the direction of the movements of a single human will. That depends on untold myriads of absolutely unforeseen contingencies. No humanly devised theory of probabilities is broad enough to solve, no human calculus is searching enough to analyze the perpetually variant fluxions of human motives, choices, and caprices. And if the solution of the famous problem of Three Bodies, in a department of investigation where everything proceeds according to definite, invariable,

clearly ascertained laws, was achieved only after the most laborious and protracted mathematical calculations by men endowed with marvelous analytic power, what shall we say of the infinite intricacy of the problems which lay before the Old Testament prophets, when they foretold, ages in advance, minute details touching the career of the coming Christ, and hazarded their minute predictions on the perfectly uncalculable movements of man's free will;—nay, more, on the infinitely varying thoughts and emotions and volitions of millions of men and women and children during hundreds of years?

Oh! brethren and friends, the argument, as I know you must feel, is absolutely overwhelming! If the transit of Venus on December 6th, 1882, in precise answer to the predictions of astronomers as based on the stable, inviolable, demonstrated laws of the natural universe, proves that God administers His material creation with an even, unwavering, inexorable hand; then the birth of Jesus Christ, in exact accordance with the predictions of the prophets—predictions hinged on the ever fluctuating volitions, and the sudden, uncalculable caprices of millions of men, and this during hundreds of years,—proves that Almighty God has had from the beginning an irreversible plan, and that the prophets of the Old Testament, in pre-

dicting as they did, were moved by His inspiration.

Psalm lxxxix. 3, 4;  
Isaiah vii. 14; Micah v.  
2.

tament that Immanuel was to be born of a virgin, and of the line of David, and in the town of Bethlehem; and when I read in the New Testament that

Matt. i. 18, 23; Luke  
ii. 1-6.

centuries after these predictions Immanuel was born of a virgin, of the line of David, in the town of Bethlehem; when I remember that these minute, precise predictions were hazarded on the capricious impulses and secret plans of millions of unborn men, scattered through Asia, Africa, and Europe, on the rise and fall of coming empires, the edicts of kings, the intrigues of politicians, the schemes of merchants, the tears of widows, the prayers of saints, the curses of reprobates, and all these for hundreds of years; when I remember that the resultant of these inconceivably numerous and complex forces was at last made to converge into one Person, out of unnumbered millions, and in one little, obscure spot of Palestine, out of the whole wide earth—when I remember all this, I feel a resistless force laid on me which compels me to confess that God is infinitely wise and strong, foreseeing from the beginning all things, and predetermining all things, because He had foreseen them. Verily, the spirit of prophecy is the testimony to Jesus. And if the



transit of Venus, in exact answer to the predictions of astronomers, proves that astronomy is true, and that you can not resist the God of nature, does not the birth of Jesus Christ, in exact answer to the predictions of prophets, prove, and for an unspeakably stronger reason, that Christianity is true, and that you can not resist the God of Scripture?

Trust God absolutely. Lastly: The issue of all that has been said to-night is in a word of cheer to all who love God; and the word of cheer is this: Trust your heavenly Father absolutely. All nature is pledged to the inviolability of God's promises, and therefore all nature is pledged to give you good cheer. You can not be loyal to infinite God in vain. As neither man nor Satan can break God's covenant of nature, so neither man nor Satan can break God's covenant of grace. Let the wise men of science convene in congress; let the high priests of nature gather in solemn conclave; let them deliberate and decree, saying: "Venus, cross not the sun's disk; light, slacken thy speed; earth, cease to roll; gravitation, lay down thy force." But lo, Venus does cross the sun's disk; light does throb as swiftly as ever; earth does continue to roll; gravitation does still balance creation. You can not

break God's ordinances of heaven and earth, God's covenant of day and night, God's laws of nature. These He has solemnly pledged as the guarantee of His own personal veracity, bidding us accept the constitution of the physical universe as the very oath and sacrament of the inviolability of His promises in Jesus Christ; and

Heb. vi. 18.

so, by these two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we have strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us. Strong as that oath and sacrament was in the prophet's day, how much stronger it is in ours, when the telescope daily brings us fresh instances of the inviolability of natural law! Every fulfillment of an astronomical prediction is a fresh witness to the veracity of God's promises. He is in very truth the covenant-keeping God. Let not, then, the transit of Venus to-day speak to you in vain. Let its celestial eloquence cheer and inspire you. Go forth, my brother, in the strengthened conviction that your Father in heaven is to be supremely trusted. Ay, blessed are all they who put their trust in Him.

Collect.

O God, who by the leading of a star didst manifest Thy only-begotten Son to the Gentiles, mercifully grant that we, who know Thee now by faith, may after this life have the fruition of Thy glorious Godhead, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



